



Seattle-King County Public Health



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) YOUTH HEALING PROJECT 5.0

RFP Release Date:	June 9th, 2026,
Due Date:	July 21st, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.
RFP Lead:	Phil Thompson, <a href="mailto:PhiThompson@KingCounty.gov">PhiThompson@KingCounty.gov</a>
Funding:	Up to \$500,000 in PHSKC

**Submit proposals through Agiloft at:**  
<https://kingcountydchs.agiloft.com/ui/-kcdchs/m/view/solicitation/250>

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## I. Application Process

Responses are hereby solicited and will be received using the link below through Agiloft no later than 5:00 p.m. on the due date noted on this RFP. Responders are responsible for regularly checking Agiloft for any updates, clarifications, or amendments.

Note: Applicants bear the risk that technical difficulties may result in late or undelivered applications. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to submit materials through Agiloft on a timely basis, and to reach out to Agiloft as noted on this RFP early in the process if encountering technical difficulties. If the issue cannot be addressed through Agiloft, then reach out to the RFP Lead as noted on this RFP.

## II. Introduction

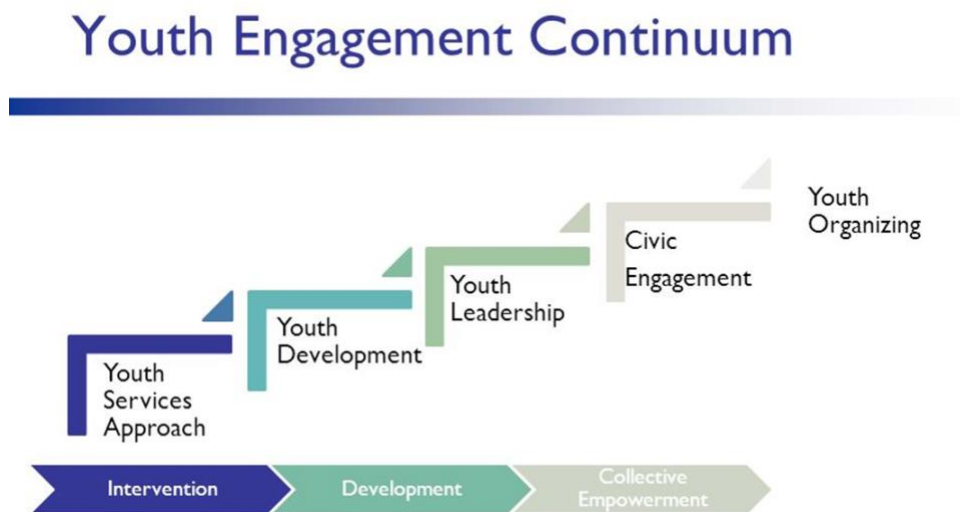
Public Health- Seattle & King County (PHSKC) is pleased to release this Request for Proposals (RFP) with funding from Best Starts for Kids and the Overdose Prevention and Response Program. This opportunity was developed by and for young people in community.

**The Youth Healing Project has two separate tracks, the youth applicant and organization applicant track.**

**Youth applicants** are young people between ages 14-24 who are interested in leading projects either collectively with another group of youth or on their own. These young people are well versed or interested in youth leadership development and should be interested in youth mental health and growing their leadership skills.

**Organization applicants** are organizations within King County well suited to support and mentor a group of young people in leadership development as well as peer-to-peer mental health support. These organizations will have experience working with and training young people to lead their own projects as well as learn more about supporting the wellbeing of other young people.

**These two tracks will support youth across the leadership engagement continuum.**



We recognize that there are many organizations that support groups of youth mental health leaders who support their peers. We also honor the youth mental health organizers in our community who operate autonomously, sometimes with support from an adult mentor. Youth leadership can operate in a variety of ways including but not limited to:

- Youth led organizing groups operating independently from local CBOs.
- Peer to peer support groups focused on educating their peers.
- Youth leadership programs in CBOs.
- Youth leaders who are part of organizations and ready to start their own programs with support from adult mentors.

**We encourage young leaders** who are invested in supporting their peers' mental health and well-being through healthy coping to apply for the **Youth track** for funding up to \$9,999.

**We invite Community Based Organizations (CBO)** with a demonstrated history of supporting youth leaders and mental health to apply for the **Organization track** for funding up to \$49,999.

## III. About The Partners

**Best Starts for Kids (Best Starts)** is King County's community-driven initiative to support every baby born and child raised in King County to be happy, healthy, safe, and thriving. Initially approved by voters in 2015 and in place since 2016, Best Starts invests in comprehensive supports for children, youth, young adults, and families and caregivers, catalyzing strong starts in early childhood, and sustaining those gains as children progress to adulthood. Best Starts was renewed by voters in August 2021. Implementation of Best Starts is guided by the Best Starts Implementation Plan, approved by the King County Council in November 2021 for Levy 2022-27. Best Starts will support youth awardees as the primary funder, grant administrator, and through data and evaluation support, as well as through project management support through our capacity building consultants.

**citiesRISE** is a multi-stakeholder initiative committed to transforming mental health globally through local innovation, coalition building, and youth led action. citiesRISE is challenging cities and communities around the world to become more mental health friendly for young people. citiesRISE partnered with King County and CCER to launch the Youth Healing Project and will continue to provide support to youth grant awardees. The grantees of this round of awards will be part of and supported by citiesRISE's Global Mental Health Learning Platform, which is an initiative that supports, mobilizes, and advances youth-driven solutions in the service of promoting mental health in their communities around the world. citiesRISE will offer youth awardees training, peer mentoring, and expert guidance to support them and their projects to thrive.

**Community Center for Education Results (CCER)** is a nonprofit created to serve as the backbone for the Road Map Project, a collective impact effort focused on dramatically improving student success and closing opportunity gaps in South King County, WA. CCER is supporting data, evaluation, and storytelling for youth awardees.

**Department of Community and Human Services' Reconnect to Opportunity (ReOpp)** helps connect young people ages 16 to 24 who are disconnected from school and work with education, employment, and post-secondary training opportunities. ReOpp youth interns and Outreach Specialists are the young leaders driving priorities and decision making in the Youth Healing Project. This team will play a lead role in outreach, funding decisions and project management.

**Public Health-Seattle and King County's Cannabis, Tobacco, and Prevention Program** works to reduce health disparities through partnerships, policies, and system changes that promote effective tobacco treatment and prevent tobacco use, nicotine addiction and exposure to secondhand smoke.

**Public Health-Seattle and King County's Overdose Prevention and Response** focuses on a wide range of efforts to reduce harm and risks associated with drug use and improve access to care and positive health outcomes. Overdose Prevention and Response will serve as a collaborative funder for this project.

### Equity and Social Justice

For many in our region, King County is a great place to live, learn, work and play. Yet we have deep and persistent inequities - especially by race and place - that in many cases are getting worse and threaten our collective prosperity. In 2020 Executive Constantine [declared racism as a public health crisis](#) and set forth policy priorities to bolster King County's commitment to being intentionally anti-racist and

accountable to Black, Indigenous People, and People of Color. Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) is an integrated part of the County's work and is foundational to the work of Best Starts. Our goal is to ensure that all people, regardless of who they are and where they live, have the opportunity to thrive, with full and equal access to opportunities, power, and resources.

For all Best Starts-funded programs, we seek to support community-led and community-informed organizations that are reflective of and embedded in the communities they serve across all aspects of their leadership and service. Additionally, across Best Starts we seek to support individuals and organizations that recognize and address the disparities that exist in our communities.

Applicants may be asked to demonstrate an understanding and a commitment to the principles of equity and social justice as shown through their staffing and their board, services tailored to community need and commitment to social justice and continuous improvement. One aspect of this work includes understanding – at both a program and system level – structural and institutional racism as it plays out for individuals served through Best Starts-funded services, and the disparate impacts on individuals' collective experiences and outcomes compared to the population as a whole.

More information about King County's ESJ work is available at:

<https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice.aspx>

## IV. Youth Healing Project Overview

### A. Program Purpose Statement

**The Youth Healing Project is a youth led community funding effort that provides resources and support to grassroots organizations and young leaders** advancing solutions that improve the mental health, connection, and well-being of young people ages 14-24 in King County. Partners include King County Reconnect to Opportunity, Best Starts for Kids, citiesRISE, PHSKC's Cannabis, Tobacco Vaping Prevention Program, PHSKC's Overdose Prevention Program, and the Community Center for Education Results.

Focus populations for this project include communities that are historically marginalized and disproportionately impacted by historical trauma, racism, the COVID-19 pandemic, and other adverse experiences that can impact emotional and mental well-being.

**If you are a young person or grassroots CBO with a commitment to youth leadership and mental health interested in this funding but need support, keep reading, we can help.** We offer technical assistance support. That means you can reach out and we will help you with your application and understanding the requirements. We will also have two virtual information sessions you can choose from to learn more and ask questions about this opportunity. To learn more about these supports you can refer to the additional attachments labeled TA support and refer to the instructions on the blog announcement.

### B. Background

#### 1. About the Youth Healing Project

In spring 2020, young leaders designed a survey to understand how youth were experiencing the pandemic. The findings, summarized in [In Their Own Words: Young People Describe the Impact of COVID-19](#)<sup>1</sup>, show the huge toll the pandemic has taken on young people's mental health, emotional well-being and sense of connection. The Youth Healing Project was designed by youth to respond directly to the survey results.

Priorities for this program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increased youth leadership, empowerment, and agency
- Improved community well-being
- Youth have increased knowledge and use of healthy coping strategies

For more information about this project, you can read more below.<sup>i</sup>

## 2. Authentic Youth Voice and Leadership

The Youth Healing Project was created by and for young people. We continue this legacy by continuing to center young people in the creation of these projects. Supporting youth voice and leadership includes centering the voices of young people in decision making project design, implementation, and evaluation. **For more information about how to utilize a youth-lead approach please refer to the resources in the footnotes<sup>2</sup>.**

### C. The Request: What this Opportunity Is

#### 1. Scope of Work: What Your Project Could Look Like

This Program will support youth-led efforts to improve the mental health, connection, and well-being of young people. The projects will take place from late 2026 through the end of 2027. We welcome creative ideas that center young people and address the negative impacts of COVID-19, historically marginalization, historical trauma, racism, and other adverse experiences that can impact emotional and mental well-being.

Projects should empower young people as leaders. Funding is flexible and can be used for staffing, youth stipends or incentives, technology, materials, and events. [Example projects](#)<sup>3</sup> from previous Youth Healing Projects include the following:

- A coloring book for elementary school students that focused on identifying emotions and violence prevention.
- Graffiti, music, and art gatherings focused on creating connection and healing through artistic expression.
- Workshops on harm reduction, Narcan, and healthy coping alternatives to substance use.

<sup>1</sup> <https://roadmapproject.org/resources/in-their-own-words-young-people-describe-the-impact-of-covid-19/>

<sup>2</sup> [Soar Youth Commission and United Way. \(2022\). Youth Tell All: Youth Centered Analysis on Youth Development in King County.](#)

<https://docs.google.com/document/u/2/d/e/2PACX->

[1vSL5bu9IxkiRZDhFdTYCGHFePZRamFVOclfg6yYweD9NF0MhizSxtQfShz9I9XMI9rhaYVhbReXrVLq/pub](https://docs.google.com/document/u/2/d/e/2PACX-1vSL5bu9IxkiRZDhFdTYCGHFePZRamFVOclfg6yYweD9NF0MhizSxtQfShz9I9XMI9rhaYVhbReXrVLq/pub)

<sup>3</sup> <https://roadmapproject.org/youth-healing-project-awards-eleven-grants-to-support-youth-mental-health-and-well-being/>

- A series of workshops that focused on destigmatizing mental health and building awareness.
- A mini documentary that documented East African youth speaking about their experiences with mental health.
- Pop up gathering spaces that supported BIPOC families in learning about mental health, yoga, mindfulness, arts, and other activities.
- A podcast focused on supporting the mental well-being of young people with sickle cell disease.
- A project for Washington Marshallese youth to connect intergenerationally, carve a canoe, and connect with ancestral practices and healing.
- A community retreat at a farm that focused on mental health, culture, intergenerational trauma, and resilience.
- A mental health and well-being group hosted on campus at a local high school, that offered healing to BIPOC students.

We welcome creative solutions that are youth led and created, the list above are examples of previous activities, but this RFP is not limited to using the models listed above.

## 2. Youth Supports and Requirements

- **All awardees will receive support from Best Starts for Kids Capacity Building Consultants** on budget management, building healthy partnerships with CBO fiscal sponsors, and program measurement and evaluation.
- Projects will culminate in a celebration where youth leaders and organizational awardees will be invited to share out their projects and accomplishments.
  - **Youth awardees will be supported** in a cohort convened by citiesRISE. citiesRise offers youth awardees training, peer mentoring, access to a global network of youth mental health leaders, and expert guidance to support them and their projects to thrive. Please note that cohort gatherings are a mandatory part of this opportunity and require monthly gatherings.
  - **Organization awardees will be supported** in grantee gatherings that meet quarterly and are focused on building capacity, resources, and coaching organizations on best practices for supporting youth leadership and mental health projects.

3. **Evaluation and Reporting:** Best Starts is committed to sharing with communities and stakeholders what happened as a result of this funding through performance measurement and evaluation. To help us do this, all awardees will be asked to collect and report data about their projects.

Best Starts uses the [Results Based Accountability \(RBA\) framework](#) to measure program performance. The RBA Framework includes three questions: 1) How many people were served/reached by this program, 2) How well did your program serve people, and 3) How are those you served better off? Performance Measures are developed to answer these three questions and are informed by the program's model and purpose. Performance Measures may include tracking the number of young people who participate in your project activities, or the number of activities held as part of your project. Specific measures will be developed in partnership with Best Starts and awardees. In addition to collecting quantitative data, youth awardees will have the opportunity to share stories about project

impact and reflect on successes and challenges in a Narrative Report that will include open ended questions. Youth awardees will be asked to track data about their projects throughout the year and share data with Best Starts in Spring 2027 and Fall 2027. Awardees will also complete a narrative report in Fall 2027.

Please note that evaluation and reporting are required parts of this funding opportunity and will include gathering information about program participants (including demographic information such as race/ethnicity, zip code of residence, and gender identity if feasible) as well as project successes.

#### 4. Investment Area(s)

The Community Well-Being Initiative is part of the Liberation and Healing strategy and part of the 5-24, Sustain the Gain investment area for Best Starts for Kids.

#### 5. Focus Population(s)

This project is designed to support young people and their peers who may not have access to mental health resources or supports. Young people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual are twice as likely as their straight peers to experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness<sup>4</sup>, while young people who are transgender are twice as likely to attempt suicide compared to their peers<sup>5</sup>. Young people who were Black or Latinx/a/o, were about 14% less likely than their white peers to receive treatment for depression, according to research by [Mental Health America](#). The same research showed that young people who are Indigenous, Black, or Latinx/a/o are more likely to attempt suicide than their white peers.

Local data shows <sup>6</sup>over one-third (36.4%) of King County youth reported experiencing depression symptoms in 2021. Students who identified as transgender (67.3%), something else (67%), questioning (62.9%), lesbian, gay and bisexual (60%) were almost twice as likely as the King County average (34.6%) to experience depressive symptoms. Hispanic/Latino (41.0%) and Multiple Race (40.9%) students also had higher than average depression rates. In response to this data, we are focusing on funding projects that serve the following communities and populations:

Focus populations for this RFP include:

- BIPOC youth
- LGBTQ youth
- Youth in King County
- Youth in underserved areas of the County
- Youth aged 14-24
- Youth impacted by substance use (this includes tobacco, vaping, opioid, and fentanyl use)
- Youth who need support accessing healthy coping strategies.
- Youth who are part of historically marginalized groups and communities.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/data/abes/tables/sexual\\_identity.htm#MH](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/data/abes/tables/sexual_identity.htm#MH)

<sup>5</sup> [Understanding the Mental Health of Transgender and Nonbinary Youth - Journal of Adolescent Health](#)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.communitiescount.org/blog/2023/9/5/experiences-of-diverse-youth-mental-health-providers-in-king-county>

## 6. Outcomes

This program will center youth led projects that advance innovative and/or culturally relevant mental health projects for their communities. Through this, we hope to see overall increased well-being in community, but more specifically success could look like many things including:

- Increased youth leadership capacity, empowerment, and agency
- Youth knowing where/how to access mental health resources when they need them
- Youth having a better understanding of mental health and well-being
- Reduced mental health stigma for youth
- Youth reporting improved mental health and increased support
- Youth reporting increased connectedness<sup>7</sup>
- Youth having increased knowledge and use of healthy coping strategies

## V. Eligibility and Requirements

### This request is open to youth applicants and organizations

#### What is the difference between the youth track and organization track for the Youth Healing Project?

**Youth applicants** are young people between ages 14-24 who are interested in leading projects either collectively with another group of youth or on their own. These young people are well versed or interested in youth leadership development and should be interested in youth mental health and growing their leadership skills.

If you are a youth applicant under the age of 18 you will need a fiscal sponsor organization (501c3) to hold your funds. Youth over 18 are also encouraged to identify a fiscal sponsor so that they have an organizational partner to hold their funds and support with contract management.<sup>8</sup> Youth can identify a fiscal sponsor organization on their applications, or the County can support them in identifying and matching with a fiscal sponsor organization. To receive support please indicate in your application on the summary document that you are looking for a fiscal sponsor.

**Organizational applicants** are organizations within King County well suited to support and mentor a group of young people in leadership development as well as peer-to-peer mental health support. These organizations should have experience working with young people and have a demonstrated interest in training young people to lead their own projects as well as learn more about supporting the wellbeing of other young people.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Healthy Youth Survey.

<sup>8</sup>Accepting funding if awarded could potentially impact a youth and/or their guardians tax reporting and/or ability to receive financial assistance due to the funds being a source of income. If this is a concern, you can reach out for support or talk to our TA providers.

**If you are a fiscal sponsor organization or organizational applicant**, you will be required to attend training on how to support youth voice and leadership. Fiscal sponsors are regarded as mentors and fiscal support for the youth leaders and not as the main project implementors. All major project decisions, including the design and execution of the application and project itself will be led by youth.

## VI. Available Funding

### For Youth Applicants

We have budgeted up to \$9,999 per proposal for this project. Proposals in excess of \$9,999 will be considered incomplete and will not be evaluated.

### For Organizational Applicants

We have budgeted up to \$49,999 per proposal for this project. Proposals in excess of \$49,999 will be considered incomplete and will not be evaluated.

Any contract awarded as a result of this procurement is contingent upon the availability of funding.

King County PHSKC reserves the right to not award all funds advertised in this RFP.

## VII. Timeline Prop

This is a tentative schedule from application to program implementation. The dates listed here are subject to change. Applicants are responsible for monitoring ZoomGrants for any changes prior to the submission deadline.

Release Date	June 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
Information Sessions	June 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2026, 3pm June 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2026, noon
Final day for to initiate request for technical assistance	July 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
Final day to submit questions via ZoomGrants	July 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
Final Q&A addendum posted	July 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
Proposals due	July 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2026, <b>by 5:00 p.m.</b>
Responses reviewed	July 22 <sup>nd</sup> - August 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2026,
Notification of selected and non-selected applicants	September 2026
Anticipated program/contract start date	October 2026

## VIII. How to Apply

### Submitting Your Application

Submit proposals through Agiloft at: <https://kingcountydchs.agiloft.com/ui/-kcdchs/m/view/solicitation/250>

Complete proposal packages will include the following:

### Include and list all required elements of your RFP.

- Summary Questions
- Narrative Questions
- Budget
- Zip code question on Agiloft

### Questions About the RFP?

You may submit questions via email to the RFP Lead identified on this page in the section labeled RFP Communication.

***If potential Applicants experience technical difficulties with Agiloft leading up to the due date, please email your Proposal to the RFP lead directly to avoid a late submission.***

Applicants are encouraged to complete their applications early to avoid any difficulties or errors in submission. PHSKC is not responsible for any technical difficulties that an applicant may experience, and late submissions may result in rejection of proposal.

### Information Sessions

Information sessions are scheduled to be held on the following days and will cover information to help you with your application.

#### Dates:

June 16th, 2026, 3pm

June 25th, 2026, noon

#### Zoom Information:

<https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/2415584053>

Meeting ID: 241 558 4053

Passcode: 319014

### RFP Communication

All RFP documents will be uploaded through Agiloft.

The RFP Lead is the sole point of contact for this procurement. All communication regarding the subject matter of this opportunity between the applicants and PHSKC upon release of this RFP must be through Agiloft or the RFP Lead, as follows:

Phil Thompson, RFP Lead  
[PhiThompson@kingcounty.gov](mailto:PhiThompson@kingcounty.gov)

Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding on King County. Applicants are to rely on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator. Communication directed to parties other than the RFP Coordinator on this opportunity may result in disqualification of the applicant.

## IX. Support With Your Application

We encourage all applicants to use our free application assistance (also known as technical assistance). The main purpose of this opportunity is to eliminate linguistic, cultural and other barriers that might prevent you from seeking government funding.

Technical assistance consultants can:

- a. Assist in determining appropriate fit between your proposal and this funding opportunity.
- b. Provide guidance on how best to answer questions.
- c. Support your application development, including editing and budget review.
- d. Consultants are not grant writers but can support you in explaining your proposal in the most clear and concise way.

See the [Best Starts website](#) for a list of TA consultants and their contact information. Individuals wishing to access application assistance should email the consultants directly. We encourage you to reach out to a TA consultant as early as possible. We cannot guarantee TA consultant availability within 5 business days of the deadline (the RFP's closing date). Assistance in languages other than English is available; let a TA consultant know your language need and Best Starts will try to accommodate that.

We encourage you to only contact one TA consultant at a time and allow them 24 hours to respond before contacting any other consultants.

### **Best Starts Capacity Building Services**

Once the contract is finalized, you will receive free capacity building services from Best Starts-contracted consultants. The goal of Best Starts capacity building is to support grantees' program and organizational development, implementation, and sustainability while being rooted in community strengths, needs, and values. Consultants provide resources and training along with individualized, responsive, and ongoing coaching and support. Best Starts capacity building consultants can also help Best Starts grantees create tools and build skills needed to meet Best Starts contract requirements. Categories of Best Starts capacity building support include board development, data & evaluation, equity & social justice, finance, human resources, IT, legal, marketing, and organizational development.

## X. Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a review panel led by youth, staff, and other community members. The process for choosing projects will include evaluation of the narrative and accompanying documents. Below are the selection criteria that will be used during the evaluation process.

<b>DOES THE PROJECT CENTER YOUTH VOICE AND LEADERSHIP?</b>	<b>10</b>
This question will be weighted and will be worth 10 points instead of 5.	
Proposal demonstrates that youth were involved and led the development of the idea. The project supports and centers youth leadership.	
<b>DOES IT CENTER COMMUNITY MOST IMPACTED/ DOES IT HAVE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION OR INVOLVEMENT?</b>	<b>10</b>
This question will be weighted and will be worth 10 points instead of 5.	
The project demonstrates that it is focused on community most impacted. The proposal demonstrated that underserved communities were prioritized and that it involves community collaboration.	
<b>DOES THE PROJECT PROMOTE YOUTH WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH?</b>	<b>10</b>
This question will be weighted and will be worth 10 points instead of 5.	
Is the project focused on youth mental health or wellbeing? Is it impactful for youth mental health outcomes?	
<b>IS THE PROJECT REALISTIC AND ACHIEVABLE?</b>	<b>5</b>
Is the scope of the project realistic? Can it be completed based on the information shared?	
<b>IS THE PROJECT CREATIVE OR UNIQUE?</b>	<b>5</b>
Does the project represent creative or non-traditional approaches? It does not have to be new but should demonstrate creativity.	
<b>EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: CENTERING COMMUNITY</b>	<b>5</b>
Proposal clearly illustrates and reflects deep understanding of equity and social justice (ESJ) issues and the underlying context in which culturally relevant services are provided to the focus population of this Program and describes a plan to provide these <b>culturally relevant services</b> .	
<b>BUDGET AND FISCAL</b>	
Applicant states how much funding they need to achieve their goals and how funds will be used.	<b>5</b>
<b>MEASURING SUCCESS</b>	
Applicant clearly identifies what success would be for the proposed program and how the program would measure success. The applicant clearly outlines their interest in building capacity to collect data and/or story tell.	<b>5</b>
	<b>55</b>

Review team members will assign scores on a scale of zero (0) to five (5), aside from questions 1-3, where scoring is defined as follows:

Score	Description	Discussion
0	No Response	The Proposal does not address any component of the requirements or no information was provided.
1	Strongly Disagree	The Proposal only minimally addresses the requirement and is missing components or components were missing.

2	Disagree	The Proposal only minimally addresses the requirement and the Applicant's ability to comply with the requirements or simply has restated the requirements. The Proposal is responsive, but does not represent best practices.
3	Neutral	The Proposal shows an acceptable understanding or experience with the requirement. Sufficient detail to be considered meeting minimum requirements. The Proposal represents best practices or an adequate alternative.
4	Agree	The Proposal is thorough and complete and demonstrates firm understanding of concepts and requirements. Proposal provides a thoughtful and innovative response but may be missing components.
5	Strongly Agree	The Proposal has provided an innovative, detailed, and thorough response to the requirements, and clearly demonstrates a high level of experience with or understanding of the requirements.

Final selection of awardees will be made by King County division and department directors based upon recommendations from the review panel and based upon equity and geographic considerations to ensure services are responsive to funding priorities and community need. The PHSKC reserves the right to make such selections based on the best interests of King County, and as a result, may not select the highest scoring or lowest cost proposals for award, and it will execute contracts based upon the final selections.

#### **A. Review Process**

The RFP review panel may consist of King County staff, external subject matter experts, evaluators, community members, advisory board members, participants with past or current lived experience, and members or designees of the King County Council (who will serve as nonvoting members). PHSKC values the perspectives of community members, including those with lived experience. All efforts will be made to include a minimum of 2 individuals representing the community. Following application review, applicants may be asked to participate in an interview with the review panel prior to final scoring of applications.

The RFP review panel will score each application based on the rating criteria described in Section 8 of this RFP and create a ranking of applications based on highest to lowest scoring. The reviewer's scores will be a factor used by the RFP review panel to develop recommendations on the selection of awardees, along with factors such as geographic areas and population served. King County also reserves the right to serve as its own reference.

#### **B. Selection Process**

Final selection of awardees will be made by King County division and department directors based upon recommendations from the review panel and based upon equity and geographic considerations to ensure services are responsive to funding priorities and community need. The PHSKC reserves the right to make such selections based on the best interests of King County, and as a result, may not select the highest scoring or lowest cost applications for award, and it will execute contracts based upon the final selections.

### C. Funding Allocation and Contract Negotiations

PHSKC anticipates that requests for funding from the pool of selected applicants may exceed the total dollar amount of funding available through this RFP. If this occurs, the County reserves the right to enter discussions with applicants to assess if proposed services and activities can be scaled to match the dollar amount offered by the County. If the application is not scalable, or the applicant rejects the dollar amount offered by the County, the County reserves the right, to withdraw the funding offer to the applicant, and enter discussions with other high-ranking RFP applicants. Contract negotiations and development will begin when a funding amount for each application has been reached between the applicant and the County.

## XI. Glossary of Terms

A list of general procurement and contract definitions can be found here: [Contract Glossary](#). All other definitions specific to this RFP are as follows:

### A. Community-Based Organization (CBO)

A public or private organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and committed to a community's health, well-being, and empowerment and/or provides human services to individuals in the community.

### B. Contractor:

Term used within the King County PHSKC Boilerplate Agreement, signifying the entity awarded funding in consideration for the performance of certain services and as described in the resulting contract.

### C. Design:

The process or act of imagining and creating meaningful responses to challenges. Activities may include listening to community, reviewing data, brainstorming ideas, and visioning what a program might look like.

### D. Development:

The process or act of clearly defining program characteristics, often through materials such as a theory of change. Activities may include drafting program curriculum, outlining the basics of what the program provides, and/or creating a clear way to communicate what the program is.

### E. Equity:

Means giving everyone what they need to be successful as opposed to equality which means treating everyone the same.

Equity, as defined by the Children and Youth Advisory Board:

- Equity is an ardent journey toward well-being as defined by the affected
- Equity demands sacrifice and redistribution of power and resources in order to break systems of oppression, heal continuing wounds, and realize justice
- To achieve equity and social justice, we must first root out deeply entrenched systems of racism
- Equity proactively builds strong foundations of agency, is vigilant for unintended consequences, and boldly aspires to be restorative

- Equity is disruptive and uncomfortable and not voluntary
- Equity is fundamental to the community we want to build

#### **F. Evaluation Plan:**

Outlines key questions seeking to learn about the program services and impact; identifies how evaluation learnings will be used, and what specific tools and approaches will be taken to collect data.

#### **G. Racial Equity:**

Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When using the term, Best Starts is thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus identifying the need to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them<sup>9</sup>.

#### **H. Relationship-Based:**

Establishing and maintaining safety, consistency, and trust in relationships and partnerships through mutually accountable, transparent, responsive, and customized-to-context communication and support (Omowale Satterwhite & Teng, 2007), being a part of a particular community to whom you are accountable to and with whom you have relationships.

#### **I. Agiloft:**

An online application portal where applicants can access and view RFP information and submit bids for programs/services outlined in the RFP.

## **XII. RFP and Contract Terms**

### **A. RFP Terms**

#### **1. Revisions to the RFP**

If PHSKC determines in its sole discretion that it is necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum to this RFP will be posted on Agiloft. For this purpose, the published questions and answers and any other pertinent information will also be provided as an addendum to the RFP and will be placed on Agiloft.

PHSKC also reserves the right to cancel or to reissue the RFP in whole or in part, prior to execution of a contract.

#### **2. Cost to Propose**

PHSKC will not be liable for any costs incurred by the applicant in preparation of an application submitted in response to this RFP, in conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related in any way to this RFP.

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### 3. No Obligation to Contract

This RFP does not obligate PHSKC to enter into any contract for services specified in this application.

### 4. Rejection of Applications

PHSKC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all applications received without penalty and not to issue any contract as a result of this RFP.

### 5. Acceptance Period

Applications must provide one hundred twenty (120) calendar days for acceptance by PHSKC from the due date for receipt of applications.

### 6. Best and Final Offer (BAFO)

PHSKC reserves the right to use a BAFO before awarding any contract to further assist in determining the successful Applicants. Terms of the BAFO will be communicated by the RFP Lead.

### 7. Award

Final selection of awardees may be made by King County division and department directors based upon final calculations and recommendations from the RFP review panel. PHSKC will execute contracts based upon the final selections.

PHSKC intends to award one or more contracts to potential Applicants. The RFP Lead will notify all Applicants in writing of the acceptance or rejection of their RFP. Written notification will be sent via email to the email address(s) submitted on the cover sheet.

### 8. Protest

King County has a process in place for receiving protests / Appeals based upon the RFP or contract awards. The protest / Appeal procedures are available at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/finance-business-operations/procurement/for-business/do-business/protest.aspx>.

## **B. Contract Terms**

### 1. King County Boilerplate

Organizations awarded through this procurement process will contract with King County PHSKC. Funded organizations will be required to meet baseline requirements, including insurance, equal employment opportunity, record keeping, and more. See a sample of the department's standard services contract boilerplate with terms and conditions.

A contract may be negotiated with the applicants(s) whose application would be most advantageous to King County in the opinion of the PHSKC, all factors considered.

The contents of the selected applicant's application shall become contractual obligations if a contract ensues.

A contract between the selected applicant(s) and King County shall include the contract instrument, the original RFP as issued by King County, the response to the RFP, and any other documents mutually agreed upon. The contract must include, and be consistent with, the specifications and provisions stated in the RFP.

## 2. Equity and Social Justice

In order to effectively operate and provide services within a culturally responsive framework, an organization shall intentionally consider equity and integrate it into its values and principles, decisions and policies. King County expects funded organizations to incorporate an equity lens in their service delivery models and administration in order to challenge systemic and structural inequality, reduce prejudice and racism, and advance equity. As part of this effort, organizations will be asked to provide individual-level demographic information (including zip codes) to inform analysis and understanding of barriers created by institutional racism.

## 3. Public Records Act

- Washington State Public Records Act (RCW 42.56) requires public organizations in Washington to promptly make public records available for inspection and copying unless they fall within the specified exemptions contained in the Act or are otherwise privileged.
- All submitted applications and RFP materials become public information and may be reviewed by anyone requesting to do so at the conclusion of the RFP, negotiation, and award process. This process is concluded when a signed contract is completed between the County and the selected applicant.
- Applications submitted under this RFP shall be considered public documents and with limited exceptions, applications that are recommended for contract award will be available for inspection and copying by the public.

If an applicant considers any portion of his/her application to be protected under the law, the applicant shall clearly identify on the page(s) affected such words as "CONFIDENTIAL," "PROPRIETARY" or "BUSINESS SECRET." The applicant shall also use the descriptions above in the following table to identify the effected page number(s) and location(s) of any material to be considered as confidential. If a request is made for disclosure of such portion, the County will review the material in an attempt to determine whether it may be eligible for exemption from disclosure under the law. If the material is not exempt from public disclosure law, or if the County is unable to make a determination of such an exemption, the County will notify the applicant of the request and allow the applicant ten (10) days to take whatever action it deems necessary to protect its interests. If the applicant fails or neglects to take such action within said period, the County will release

the portion of the application deemed subject to disclosure. By submitting an application, the applicant assents to the procedure outlined in this paragraph and shall have no claim against the County on account of actions taken under such procedure. Please notify the County of your needs through the Contact Admin tab in ZoomGrants and reference the table information below.

Type of Exemption	Beginning Page / Location	Ending Page / Location

#### 4. American with Disabilities Act

King County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicants may contact the RFP Lead to receive materials for this RFP in alternative formats, such as Braille, large print, audio tape, or computer disc.

- Language Accessibility

Upon request, this RFP can be made available in other languages.

### XIII. List of Attachments

- A. Summary Questions
- B. Narrative Questions
- C. Budget
- D. Technical Assistance for Applying for Funds
- E. Acceptance of Potential Agreement Terms
- F. Sample Contract Terms

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#### <sup>i</sup> Data and Rationale:

There has been an increased need for mental health solutions since the start of the pandemic. According to the APA, 84% and 72% of psychologists have seen an increase in anxiety and depression rates. Black, brown, Indigenous, API, and LGBTQ+ young people face even more challenges with less access to mental health resources. This RFP is designed to build connections between young people and their peers and to connect them to mental health resources they may not have been connected to otherwise. We have seen reports from the CDC that state that 75% of LGBTQ youth have experienced persistent feelings of sadness in comparison to 37% of their heterosexual peers.

Young people who are transgender are twice as likely to attempt suicide compared to their peers, according to a study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health. Additionally, more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of youth has experienced racism, these experiences have been linked to poor mental health, academic performance, and lifelong health risk behaviors.

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According to data from Washington State Department of Health Rapid Health Information Network, rates of suicidal ideation are increasing for all youth, but have increased significantly among BIPOC and assigned female at birth youth.